Dear Friends,

As summer approaches, we continue to work hard to serve Haitian families. In Canaan, we are expanding our reach by continuing our work with solar lamps and street naming. We are partnering with local firms to teach members of the community how to maintain and repair the solar streetlamps, which have been installed in their neighborhood for the safety of all.

In the south, we continue our work three years after Hurricane Matthew. We are expanding our programs to include water and sanitation initiatives, which allows families access to better hygiene for improved health. You can read more about Amerose and her husband (pictured above) on Page 3!

As you are all well aware, we are living through tough times. The novel coronavirus has proven to be the great equalizer of our time. In Haiti, we have felt the effects of the virus. As of May 13, we have over 200 confirmed cases. Our staff have been working from home since March and our schools and factories remain closed. In these uncertain times, we have witnessed many instances of people coming together to help their neighbors in this time of need. At Habitat Haiti, we have been hard at work organizing and distributing handwashing stations at our construction sites as well as in the communities we work.

We are also organizing awareness sessions to share simple tips to help families stay safe. You can read more about these initiatives on the next page. It will be some time before we understand the full impact of the virus on the country, but as an organization we are committed to playing our part to help families recover.

We are grateful for your continued support and are keeping each of your, our global community, in our thoughts and prayers. Stay well.

Blessings,
Jean Frenel Tham
National Director
The impact of COVID-19 is already being felt in Haiti and throughout the Caribbean. On March 19, the government confirmed its first two cases and declared a state of emergency. The Haitian government has taken steps to limit the spread, including closing all schools and factories until further notice and establishing an 8 pm curfew. Lack of testing and access to protective equipment has already proven a problem, and we anticipate this will continue to be a major issue.

At Habitat for Humanity Haiti, we believe it’s more important than ever in the face of this crisis to continue to support the communities in which we work. In order to face the coronavirus pandemic, Habitat for Humanity Haiti has taken measures to ensure the safety of its staff as well as its beneficiaries.

Our offices are functioning with minimum operations and only a few team members allowed in the building at a time.

A hand washing station has been installed at the front door to ensure that anyone stepping into the building, employees or otherwise, washes their hands prior to entering. All employees who can work remotely are greatly encouraged to do so. We continue our construction work in the North in communities affected by the 2018 earthquake, but we have provided members of the community with hand washing stations as well as training seminars on the proper measures to fight off infection.

We have also taken measures to reduce the number of builders who are on site at any given time. Our staff have assembled a team to bring people in rural Haiti the proper tools to combat the coronavirus providing soap, bleached water, and the lifesaving information required to prevent the spread of the disease.
Our awareness campaigns are done in small groups, or door-to-door, while maintaining a safe distance between participants.

All participants are informed of proper measures to undertake in order to remain safe from disease. This includes, but is not limited to, frequent hand washing, sneezing into elbows, avoiding crowded areas, avoiding handshakes, and cheek kisses, which are common greetings in Haiti.

Participants are trained on appropriate water storage techniques and the importance of wiping down surfaces and washing produce before consuming it.

Habitat for Humanity Haiti is committed to taking every necessary precaution to ensure the safety of our staff as well as beneficiaries. Your donations continue to help us to empower the communities in Haiti. Together, we empower!

**MEET A HABITAT FAMILY**

Habitat Haiti beneficiary, Amerose, makes the most of her parcel of land in Grand’Anse. There, she grows corn to eat and feed her chickens, while the excess is sold at market. She also showed us her pineapples, which were slowly growing on their bushes, awaiting the summer season during which she tells us the plentiful pineapples give off the most pleasant smell as they come in 3 to 4 in a bunch. She also makes cassava, a Haitian flatbread which can take about 5 days to prepare. First, she explains, you cultivate the grains, then you grind them, then you let them dry, and finally you cook it. Cassava is often eaten in the morning with peanut butter, or, avocado. Our very own local version of avocado toast! Amerose moved into her new Habitat home last year.
Tell us a bit about yourself? My name is Taina Camy. I’m 33 years old, married with two children, a boy and a girl.

How long have you been with Habitat? Since December 2013.

Where are you from? I was born and raised in Haiti. I have a degree in sociology which I received from the Université de l’Etat d’Haïti.

What motivates you? I have a long background in the nonprofit sector in Haiti where I have worked mostly in gender equality. I’m lucky enough to have found a job where I can fuse my passion and my livelihood. With Habitat for Humanity, I’ve been able to work on various gender-related projects, which ensure that women are not left out of the conversations around home ownership and construction.

What is one of your fondest memories with Habitat? During one of our projects, we sent people from the community of Simon Pele to a vocational school to learn construction. My goal was to make sure that everyone who enrolled stuck with the program and obtained their certificates. One young man in particular explained that a life of crime was all he knew because he was born into it. I kept an open door policy with everyone in the program, and one day, this young man asked to see me. He brought me $1 and explained that he knew this dollar wasn’t much, and would make no difference in my life, but it was the first dollar that he had earned honestly. I was incredibly moved by that moment.

What are three words that best describe you? Joyful, friendly, determined.

What are some of your hobbies and interests? As I mentioned earlier, I’m very passionate about women’s rights. I’m involved in several organizations that fight for the rights of women and girls in Haiti. Aside from that, I’m someone who loves life, and believe that things should bring you joy. If it doesn’t bring you joy, what’s the point of having it in your life? I love to dance, play with my children, laugh with friends, and try to always spread joy.

What are some of your plans for the future? I plan on getting a Master’s Degree and continue the work I do to empower women and girls in Haiti, especially those who are often marginalized by society and don’t have access to the tools that would help them advance in life and empower themselves.

For more information contact Anna Oltmann, Resource Development Manager at aoltmann@habitat.org